

DEWBERRY GROWING

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Dewberries are well adapted to home plantings and are consistent in supplying a berry crop each year. Forty to fifty plants will supply an average family with berries. Approximately a quart per plant can be expected. From year to year the planting can be increased by taking up small sprouts in the old row and setting out new areas.

SELECTING VARIETIES

Dewberries can be grown in all sections of Texas where the annual rainfall is above 25 inches. Dewberries grow best in sandy soil where the moisture supply is uniform throughout the season. Dewberries prefer acid soil to limey soil. They will grow in rather poor soil if the moisture supply is adequate.

VARIETIES FOR EAST TEXAS

Young - Canes are trailing and very vigorous. The canes are somewhat susceptible to anthracnose. This variety has been very popular due to the size and excellent flavor of its fruit, the ease of harvesting and vigor of plants. The berries are purplish-black in color, very large, soft when fully matured. The seed are few, but large. The pack is attractive and popular on local market. Berries should be iced if shipped for any long distance. Fruit ripens from the second week in May to early June.

Boysen - Canes are trailing and vigor is only poor to fair, making this variety a rather shy bearer. It is also susceptible to disease. The fruit is reddish purple in color, extra large and soft. The flavor is excellent and seed are extra large. It is too soft for any long distance shipping, but is desirable for a fancy pack on local markets. Fruit ripens from mid-May to early June.

Regal-Ness - This variety was developed by the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. Canes are fairly erect and vigorous. Fruit quality is good, being medium sized, firm and sufficiently acid to can. Plants have proved somewhat cold tender. Fruit begins to ripen the last week in April.

VARIETIES FOR CENTRAL TEXAS

Austin Mays - Canes are trailing and very vigorous. The berries are comparatively small and soft with medium size seed and are of good quality. It is a heavy yielder. The fruit ripens for home orchards for early fruit and local market.

Young, *Regal-Ness*, and *Boysen* varieties are also recommended for this area.

VARIETIES FOR WEST TEXAS

Big-Ness - Cane growth of this variety is very similar to that of *Regal-Ness*, both in habit of growth and in vigor. The fruit of this variety is very outstanding in size. It is too soft to ship well, but because of its large size and earliness it makes a very desirable home garden variety. Fruit begins to ripen the last week of April.

Young, *Boysen*, *Regal-Ness* and *Austin Mays* are also recommended for this area.

VARIETIES FOR SOUTH TEXAS

Young, *Boysen*, *Regal-Ness*

VARIETIES FOR NORTH-CENTRAL TEXAS

Young, *Boysen*, *Austin Mays*

SETTING PLANTS

Plant in fall or early spring on soil that has been plowed and thoroughly harrowed. Set plants at the same depth they stood in former planting, and pack soil tightly around roots. If soil is dry, settle by pouring in some water as setting is done. Cut back tops of plants to a height of four to six inches at time of setting.

Proper Spacing - Set *Regal-Ness*, *Big-Ness* and *Austin Mays* varieties in rows eight to ten feet apart, with plants set four feet apart in the rows. This spacing will equal 1,088 plants per acre. Set the *Young* variety in rows ten feet apart, with plants set six feet apart in the row. This spacing will equal 726 plants per acre.

CULTIVATION

If the planting is large, we recommend an implement known as a grape hoe for plowing close to the plants. This hoe will save much hand labor. Shallow tillage is desirable. Cultivate continuously throughout the entire summer season.

PRUNING AND TRAINING

The first growing season no pruning is done. The second season the growth from which the crop was harvested should be cut back to the ground line, leaving the new canes (current season's growth.) These new canes should be thinned out so that there is not over fourteen for each plant. By heading back the canes that are left, the ease of cultivation and harvesting will be facilitated. The crop the following spring will be borne on this new growth. Repeat this procedure each year. Where extremely rank vine growth occurs, it may be necessary to pick up the runners that tend to fill up the areas between the rows (middles), and lay them in the row to make cultivation easier.

The *Young* and *Boysen* varieties make a rank growth. For home use, it is best to train by trellising. Commercial plantings may be allowed to run on the ground because of the expense involved in trellising on a large scale. Where a trellis is used, seven foot posts should be set about twenty feet apart, and two No. 12 gauge wires strung at levels of two and one-half feet, and five feet from the ground.

Six to eight runners should be trained "fan-like" over the wire trellis. Others should be pruned off the plant.

ROOTING RUNNERS TO MAKE NEW PLANTS

After the crop has been harvested and the old canes (runners) pruned off, the ends of the new runners may be covered with soil and by fall roots will be developed on the part that is covered by soil. These may be cut off a few inches back toward the main body of the plant, taken up, and set out as new plants. Thus one "mother" plant can become the source of several "daughter" plants for increasing the size of the berry patch.

FERTILIZERS

Approximately twenty tons of manure per acre applied and worked into the soil during the winter months will tend to stimulate plant growth and increase yields. In sandy soil areas of adequate rainfall, 400 to 600 pounds per acre of a 5-10-5 commercial fertilizer applied March 1 to April 1 will prove beneficial in maintaining uniform plant growth and production.

YIELDS

The usual well cared for planting of dewberries, constituting 726 to 1,088 plants may reasonably be expected to yield 400 gallons of berries or more per acre. Sales are commonly made in 24-quart crates.

DISEASES

The fungus disease known as red rust is a rather common trouble found in berry plantings. This disease is characterized by rusty areas appearing on the foliage and stem of the plants. As soon as it appears, the affected plants should be dug up and burned. All the roots should be carefully removed.

Anthracnose and Leaf Spot - This disease occurs to some extent on the Young variety. It is characterized by circular, grayish-white scabby spots on the runners (canes.) Plants so affected are weakened and production is decreased. A summer spray should be applied when the disease becomes evident, using four pounds of copper sulphate, four pounds of hydrated lime in fifty gallons of water. Dissolve the copper sulphate in five gallons of water and mix the lime in five gallons of water in a separate container. Strain these solutions together into a barrel and add enough water to make a total of fifty gallons of spray. Two or three applications of this spray may be necessary to keep this disease under control.

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